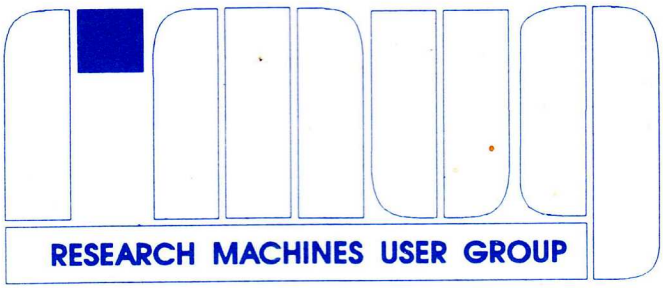
RM User

Volume 10:1

May 1995



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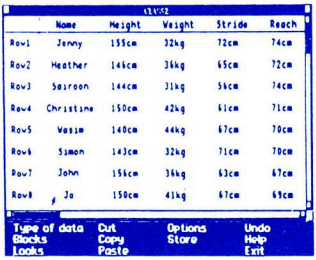

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Row2	Heather	146cm	36kg	65cm	72cm
Row3	Sairoon	144cm	31kg	56cm	74cm
Row4	Christine	150cm	42kg	61cm	71cm
Row5	Wasim	140cm	44kg	67cm	70cm
Row6	Simon	143cm	32kg	71cm	70cm
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Type of data Blocks Looks | Cut Copy Paste | Options Store | Undo Help Exit

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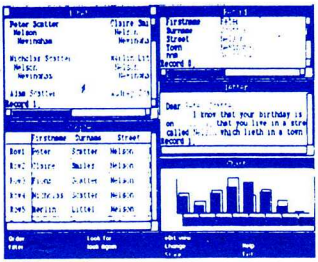

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Send for more information

HelpLine

The User Group exists to help its members use the computers which they have.

The magazine is the main way in which we communicate with our members. If you find that it's not covering the areas you want to know about then phone someone listed at the back and let them know what you would like to see; the chances are that you won't be the only person who has the same needs.

Many of you (about 20%) are home users of Nimbus computers and we would like to help you. Do please phone any of the people whose numbers are listed at the back of the magazine and we will do our best to help.

You may find that you have a problem which you feel is too trivial for Customer Support or you may have a problem with which they can't help, perhaps because you have a non-standard setup for your equipment or you are using third-party equipment. This is the time when we may be able to help.

Remember that you can telephone the User Group members in the evening or at weekends when RM is shut (and, of course, you are just bound to hit problems). Also, RM don't claim to have great knowledge of products which they don't produce such as Excel or PageMaker. They can tell you how to install the packages on their equipment and how to get started but they cannot be expected to give you in-depth support on using the packages. We, on the other hand, can. Most of the people whose phone numbers are listed at the back are using a range of software which is probably the same as yours on a daily basis. We may have met exactly the problem you have just encountered.

If you are in difficulty, please ring anybody on the Committee (numbers at the back) and you may also phone Tim Phillips on 01284 706623 (home number). It is a great help if you are having a problem doing something using your computer if you can be next to it when you phone because it may then be possible to talk you through a solution over the phone.

If your problem is not urgent, or you think it may be difficult to explain over the phone, then do please write to the Editor with your query. I will either reply to you directly or pass your query on to a better person to solve it or publish your letter in the next magazine as a request for help.

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Deadlines for the next issues

RM User 10:2 ..... 10 June 1995
RM User 10:3 ..... 6 September 1995

The date shown above is the ***latest*** date for copy for the magazine. You will normally receive the magazine about 2-3 weeks after the date shown.

Missing a Magazine?

Back issues of the magazine are available from the editor - please write for more details.

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News and Editorial

Black holes

It has been an amazing time for me since the last issue. I have never felt a greater need for doublespace to run on my clock! I have just got a new laptop from RM which has involved an investment of time to learn its ins and outs. I have been trying to learn more about the Internet - and that, as those of you who have been there will know, is a black hole for time too. I had hoped the former would help the latter but in spite of buying a state-of-the-art Psion PCMCIA card modem, I am embarrassed to admit that I could not get it to work. I found this particularly galling since my last modem from Electronic Frontier was installed with no fuss at all. And PCMCIA is supposed to offer plug and play. Hopefully by the time you read this RM will have one of their excellent guides available. This is something they do incredibly well as anyone who tried to install Microsoft Mail with and without RM's help will surely testify. While writing this article the spell checker offered me lapdog for laptop and internment for internet!

Heaven or Hell?

I was impressed with some of the items on Channel 4's Visions of Heaven & Hell series. I was particularly struck by the aptness of the images they used in the background at one point. They had a view of a main London artery, such as Oxford St, seen from above. The film was speeded up and showed the traffic lurching forward and stopping as the lights changed. It struck me as a good simile of the access that many users have to the Internet! Speaking of which, I have nothing but praise for the team at RM whose list of pointers must be starting to rival the amount of data in the libraries... If you are using any other system to launch into it, try http://rmplc.co.uk. Has anyone out there managed to offer any Internet services to their network users? I would like to download a series of pages and then have my users access them from the server. Any hints or tips in this area would be gratefully received. Compuserve, 0800 289378, have a CDROM which for $5.95 is very good value. GO ORDER. They have also released their internet browser. GO NETLAUNCHER. It is a very smooth service and they give you three free (except for the phone) hours per month. I have a feeling that the browser is slower than RM's Netscape, possibly in the same way that Word6 seems slower than Word2. Their big selling points is still their high number of POPs.

Something old something new

Ca$h is a £70 database program designed to help you use your coupons before they expire. Apparently this optimistic marketing is inspired by the fact that the same demographic group collect the coupons and use PCs! There is a super scanner called Papermax from SGI, 01732 763881, which for £600

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offers auto control via serial port. Quad speed CDROM drives are down to £168 + VAT from Silica. Logitech, 01344 894300, are still trying to get digital stills into the market. They have a new machine, the Fotoman Pixtura, able to do 768x512, 48 images or more at lower res. A word of warning on the VR front. I have read about two cases of people using virtual reality headsets and later suffering from inverted vision. In one case the victim was driving and was lucky to reach the side of the road without being in an accident. It apparently took 25 minutes to re-invert. I suffer a similar problem when I spend time trying to see those hidden 3D images!

Wish list

Over 3 years ago I asked RM for the Novell facility that allowed Admin to see any monitor on the network. I was told it was not wanted. (Where DO they do their market research?) We are now told it might be possible. I would like to add the ability to broadcast to all monitors at once. I am working on a wishlist for RM. It will include an easy way to add SCSI drives to the server - and why not CDROMs while we are at it. Better guarantees, Simple Computers offer 5 years, 1 year on-site and 4 more RTB (return to base). I was told that I would have to pay £40 for having a disc drive checked. I have to say that I am finding disc-drives are less reliable now. I replaced it with a £25 drive from CPC. I have a teletext card in one of my stations. Unfortunately it uses a DOS program but even so it is popular and I sometimes do an exercise where each student chooses a news story which is then saved to their directory as a text file. They have to amplify the story - much as a "real" reporter might work with a feed from Reuters. They can use on-line reference sources or they might choose a story where they already know some background data. My wish here is to put the card in the server and have access from any station.

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The Eyewitness Encyclopaedia of Science

by Mary Mabey

This is another visually exciting, highly polished Dorling Kindersley title designed for the American home market. It covers Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry. Having negotiated the title screen the problems for educational use start with the main menu screen, a technical "tour de force" of multi media wizardry. I felt as if I was sitting at the control panel of a tardis in Dr Who! All kinds of whizzing, clanking, whirring, twirling sounds and exciting animations accompany the selection of the menu options - more reminiscent of an arcade game than a reference tool. The first time I saw this screen I marvelled at the creative talent of the designer and programmer but this soon wore off as I found myself continually shunted back to it between searches. In school, where resources are limited, even the students see this a tedious, time wasting, noisy and disruptive interlude to their efforts. Only by trial and error did I discover that the back-a -screen button was:

on the side panel of this incredible menu screen.

So guess what you use the

for, (Help) or the

(Print option!) . is the icon for the A-Z index,

cunningly concealed on the right of the screen.

When you get past this screen there are problems of American spelling, audio commentary and terminology so it is not a suitable reference tool to be used without teacher support. I was most impressed by some of the animations and explanations in the Mathematics section although I was "lost" after the first few sentences in the spoken definitions of how to add and multiply fractions. This highlights the fact that the disk is aimed at American adults - method and terminology are not always the same as our own, there is less use of the metric system and terms are frequently confusing for a British user.

Despite this, there are a number of areas where the disk could be a valuable teaching aid. Normally the IT component in the maths curriculum is limited to spreadsheets, some modelling and working through disks of mathematical exercises. (This last example is far cheaper using a textbook and contributes precious little to IT capability - apart from switching on and off!) The Geometry section on this disk

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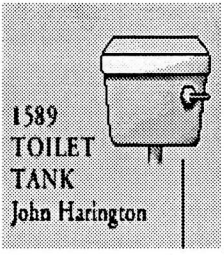
however contains a number of excellent animations of geometric shapes which can be rotated, unfolded, stretched .....(solid figures such as polyhedra, conic sections, angles in polygons, reflection, rotation etc.) I only wish that this had existed when I was at school trying to understand geometry from the flat illustrations on a printed page. There are also basic illustrations of fractions, square roots graphs and charts. The coverage is superficial. Don't expect a definitive maths encyclopaedia. The same applies to the science sections. The title is somewhat misleading. This is hardly an encyclopaedia and should perhaps be more accurately described as "The layman's guide to Science and Mathematics" or "An introduction to Science and Mathematics."



In the Science sections I was particularly unnerved by the American pronunciation of "aluminium." If I momentarily could not understand what they were talking about how would my inner city pupils cope? Although there was a table of reactivity for metals I was most surprised to find no table of facts about the planets. The whole of the solar system section was a disappointment. In fact the animation, enlargements and tabular details in Encarta are far superior. The Periodic table contains separate information cards on all elements although the spelling can be irritating at times:

It also includes the term "Poor Metals" which surprised my Science department who felt that this was an unnecessary confusion for GCSE pupils. I felt that the Life Science (Biology) section was very weak. There is a screen on Ecology with information on Pollution. A video window shows exhaust smoke coming from a car and the narration explains that these gases are harmful to children, especially when they contain lead, but there is no mention of asthma, cancer, effect on buildings.... etc. In Physics there is a good section on machines explaining levers, pulleys, ramps etc. which could be of interest to technology teachers. (If they can stomach the American pronunciation of levers!) Physics is the most detailed section on the disk. There is also a section of biographies of famous Scientists including Michael Faraday (a true native of SE London) who apparently moved to London from Newington! Overall this is an interesting disk but of patchy use as a curriculum tool. It is also far from being a definitive reference tool for Scientific queries. I looked for answers to questions which pupils had put to me in the previous week:

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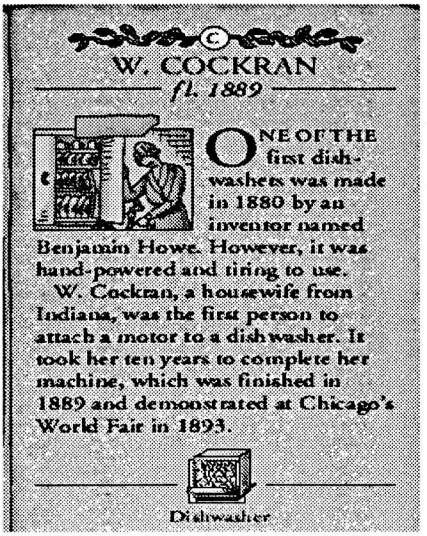
If you have the money to spare and enough time to comb through this disk for useful information it's fine but don't expect it to be a true encyclopaedia. Encarta is just as informative on a number of these topics with the added bonus of a number of excellent animations which clarify scientific concepts. Comparing the explanation of the Doppler Effect in Encarta and the Encyclopaedia of Science is quite revealing. In the library the main menu is bound to attract attention from casual browsers who may decide to "play" the enclosed game. This is a little unusual because the player is asked a question and then offered the option of seeing the answer. Unfortunately the answer is produced via an automated progress back to the main menu, which then whirrs and chugs its way to the correct screen in the encyclopaedia. My daughter immediately commented, "Oh no, not that screen again. Why on earth can't it go straight to the answer!" I think this sums up the problem, too much care and effort was expended on the design of the main screen which completely dominates the title and not enough devoted to the content. There is a perfectly serviceable A-Z index but even that is routed through the opening menu. If a British edition is developed I hope that there will be an option to suppress the opening screen and that the textural content will be improved with more animation put into explanations and definitions of scientific terms.


W. COCKRAN
fl. 1889
ONE OF THE first dishwashers was made in 1880 by an inventor named Benjamin Howe. However, it was hand-powered and tiring to use.
W. Cockran, a housewife from Indiana, was the first person to attach a motor to a dishwasher. It took her ten years to complete her machine, which was finished in 1889 and demonstrated at Chicago's World Fair in 1893.
Dishwasher

If you have just started to use Internet, or are seriously considering taking out a subscription there are two books which might help you. One is called "Highways for learning" at £7.50 from NCET, Milburn Hill Road, Science Park, Coventry, CV4 7JJ. Tel.01203 416994. (If you are already on Internet you can download this from http://ncet.csv. warwick.ac.uk/www/randd/highways/index.html where it is FREE. The other book written by staff at Mill Hill School is called "The UK School Internet Primer" by Nicholas Mailer and Bruce Dickson. This costs £8.50 from Koeksuster Publications, St Augustin's Cottage, High Street, Mill Hill, London. NW7 1QY. Both of these are commendably brief, take the mysticism out of most of those strange "net anacronyms" and are quite firmly aimed at teachers. Humorous cartoons and large clear type make the Mill Hill book a pleasure to read. If you are already a net fanatic this could be an excellent way to persuade your staff and headteacher to take out a subscription for the school.

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Bash Street Hackers

or lock up your daughters and DOS by Geoff Nelder

...and sons too if they play about with our hard-disks. In spite of mostly hard-diskless stations, there are a few hard-disks for multi-media stations here and there and they need protecting. The trouble is that the students read the same magazines that I do. So, as soon as I modify progman.ini to disable Save Settings, File - Run etc some young William Gates or other uses Write or a feature of one of the allowed programs to re-edit it.

On booting up some students have found that pressing left-Shift, F5 or F8 at the MS-DOS display allows them to by-pass my cunning and fool-proof menu systems and allow them access to the hard disk. Once there DOOMII is loaded and running until discovery. The latter is no problem. Schools are full of fifth columnists ready to ingratiate themselves with a bit of blagging.

Writing switches= /f /n into the config.sys disables the left-Shift, F5 and F8 short cuts. However, the blighters can still Ctrl Break to terminate the autoexec.bat. The Break=off command does not disable Ctrl Break at boot up.

Does anyone know a straight forward method to disable Ctrl Break at boot? I have been given a cleverer than normal autoexec.bat by David Withnall at the Cheshire Micro Unit that would seem pretty good. Mind you, when all else fails the student might use his or her own boot disk. Then award him or her an A* and ban them from everywhere except the network. The network seems to be the most secure part of the whole school.

This seems to be an area that RM are a bit lacking. All their stand alone systems and hard disks on stations come unprotected and with the "Press Del to tamper with the CMOS" message showing on boot-up. I've had to rush to the office to attrib this and that, write a Restrictions in progman.ini etc before its too late. Why is there not a card shipped with each machine with useful security advice for the IT Manager and some precautions already done on shipping out?

I obviously fail at being an actor. There I am trying to be a hard man when one of the ne'er do wells asks me what I'm doing that night. Even quaint Chester has its run-down estate where the alsations patrol in pairs. In amongst it all is some graffiti splattered corrugated iron which is the Youth Club.

"We can't get colour on our game no more."

Armed with my usual DOS disks and screwdriver plus a nervous twitch I entered the den. Much to my surprise I

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was nearly carried in jubilation to the offending machine. To my horror, the machine was not a nintendo, amiga or cheapo PC clone but a Local Authority power machine complete with modem for a direct Cheshire-Link to the County Hall main-frame!

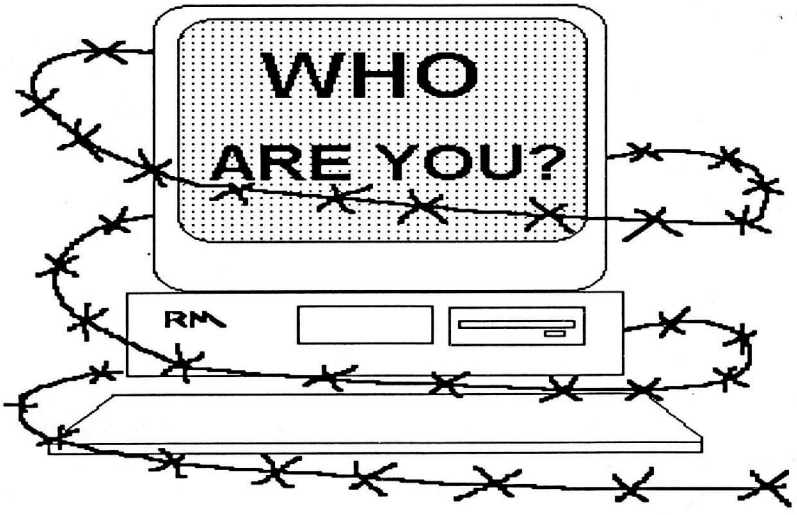
I asked who is allowed on the machine but they looked confused as if it belonged to all of them.

"Well," I asked a little nervously, "how do you find your game in the security menu system with its double password that comes on at boot up?"

I was shown how a few combination key presses by-passes everything that Cheshire County Council put in the way and gave access to DOS, Windows, the modem and the lot! Was anything locked or protected? No, because no-one can get passed the initial security!

What devious sabotage were these Bash Street hackers up to? Just playing with Windows Paintbrush. Once I had deleted the 185 .tmp files Pbrush ran in colour again. I put a del c:\temp*.tmp line the autoexec.bat file and checked the rest of the system. No problems. They could have got through to County Hall on the modem, altered Windows settings, put unmentionable horrors on, formatted the hard disk etc but they seemed to be too naive - so far.

I shared this adventure with a County Planner one evening and he teased the County IT Unit with it. I have been told to expect a call from them any time after disbelief turned to consternation.



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The Next Training Weekend

By Phil Fox

The RMUG annual training weekend is an event on which the committee spend a large amount of time. No sooner is one weekend completed than the committee begins to prepare for the next. This article tries to explain a little of the background to how the weekend is planned.

At the end of each training weekend participants are asked to complete an evaluation sheet giving their comments about the weekend. The RMUG committee uses the information on these sheets to decide such things as location and programme.

In deciding to return again to the Nottingham Novotel we looked at the responses and found that 85% approved of the venue and over 90% rated the accommodation as better than average. On a personal note I would say that the Novotel chain are also very accommodating in meeting the requirements of RMUG. Late night sessions in the bar and last minute requests are always courteously dealt with. Something which is not always the case.

Another aspect of the training weekend which the committee gives careful thought to is the value for money. Last year 85% of the participants who completed their evaluation sheets rated the weekend in the top quarter of the scale. Given that the provisional price of the training weekend is £250, we aim to offer as good a value this year as last.

As the committee strive to produce a balanced programme of sessions we always consider the responses from previous years. Last year the training sessions on the Microsoft products Word 6, Excel 5 and Access 2 all proved to be very popular. We will repeat these sessions this year but given the stability of the products we will be offering advanced sessions for those users who have been using the product for some time.

The RM Net LM question time was, as always, essential for network managers with questions ranging from the mundane to the esoteric. All covered by the professional panel provided by RM. This session will of course be repeated this year. Please note that questions supplied in advance were dealt with in much more detail than ones presented at the session. This year the questions for this session are being co-ordinated by Glen Taylor.

Another popular session last year was the control session run by

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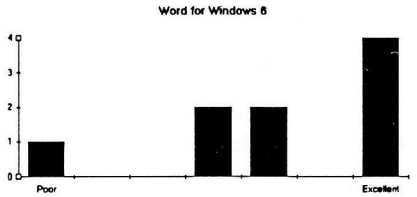
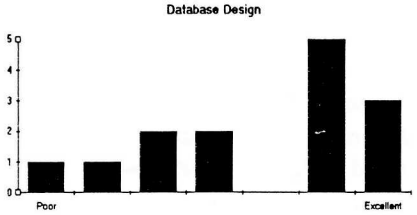
Economatics, whilst this session looked at Fisher Technic equipment participants who used other equipment in their establishments were able to benefit from the sharing of experiences between participants and the presenters. This year we will be offering a course titled *Control on the Cheap*, this session will be presented by Lyndon Evans who has previously led many popular courses.

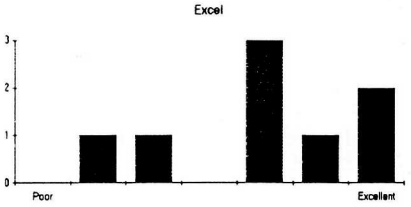
Following on from the comments written on the evaluation sheets, the committee has decided to publish greater details of each session in advance. This information will cover such things as target audience, session format and pre-requisite knowledge.

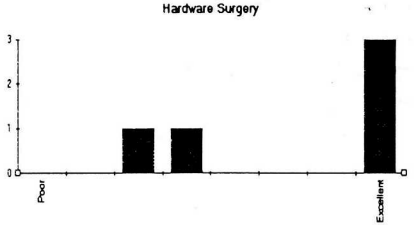
As a final plea from the committee if you have a burning desire for some course, or wish to offer your skills as a presenter please do get in contact either with myself or any member of the committee.

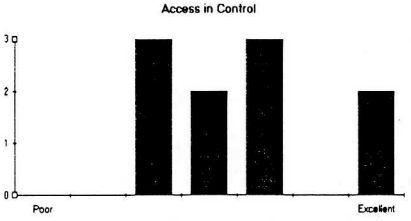
The graphs shown here summarise the responses from the evaluation sheet. Anyone who wants the original datafile in Excel 4 format can have a copy by sending me a disc or downloading it from the RM BBS.











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LETTERS

Judy Barbieri. Willow Yard. 222 St. Margaret's Road. Twickenham, Mddx TW1 1NP

Dear Sir or Madam: After an incident that occurred to me last week and fruitless research into the area, I would like to know what the position of an IT. classroom teacher is in regard to the Data Protection Act of 1984 especially in the area of teaching databases. If a teacher asked a class to collect twenty-five to thirty records made up of friends' addresses or birthdays and then each pupil places the information into a data file which they had created and stores the information on their own disk, would this constitute a violation of the act? Yes, it would have been easier to use public domain or fictitious (how do we instil data accuracy?) material but the shadow would still remain over those parts of education required by the National Curriculum to deliver Information Technology that is in essence all of education. The act being, written in 1984, did not foresee the great boom of information technology within educational institutions so I feel real problems may begin to emerge as 'parent power' begin to question IT. teaching methods or IT subject matter. I am writing to you, as a classroom teacher, to find the answers (if any) to the following questions:

1. Is there any definitive ruling on the use of personal data files being created within the educational environment (the classroom)?

2. Have any other teachers or educational institutions been faced with this problem and how have they solved or approached the dilemma? Thank you for your time, I remain, Yours faithfully, Judy Barbieri (Mrs)

Doug Weller, Co-owner UK-Schools mailing list. voice +44 121 708 1254. Langley Junior & Infant School,St. Bernard's Rd, Solihull UK B92 7DJ.

Some notes about the Tesco scheme:- I'm a teacher in an Acorn school, no financial relationship though with Acorn or Tescos. There, that's said. The offer actually includes quite a bit of non-Acorn stuff, eg; Acorn Pocketbook 2, like the Psion, with either Acorn, PC or Mac links. Olivetti JP 360colour printer. Live datalogger. Discs, mouse mats, disc wallets. A Touchwindow. Hitachi remote control portable TV. Canon Ion camera. Hitatchi stereo radio cassette recorder. Hitachi VME 210 8mm camcorder. Irlam colour hand scanner. Cumana CD Rom drives Oscar and Bravo (I assume these will go with other computers, they fit into the parallel port).

Langley's Home page is at: http://schoolnet.sys .uea.ac.uk/schoolnet/pri/lang.html

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Shoptalk

by David Palmer

I had a couple of good lessons involving research and reporting. The first was prompted by the arrival of Techtrak from BNFL, 01937 840209. This program offers a series of challenges where you must pick six scientists that relate to a theme. As you choose them, you must answer a question about them. If you get it right and get all six then you have to return them to a date which is determined by a clue. We have the DOS version of Hutchinsons encyclopedia on the network and I got the students to work in pairs, one running Techtrak and the other using the encyclopedia on the next machine. It was one of those marvellous lessons where the class were totally involved in what they were doing. Impressed by this response, I later brought in some physics classes who were about to start a module on the solar system. Again they worked in pairs, one with the encyclopedia (I consider it a bonus here that you can't copy and paste) and one with a word processor. I asked them to construct their own tables of data about the solar system. I made no restrictions and again the lesson (this time a double period) passed in a positive blur. I have been looking at a Disklite -a Plug & Play extra hard disc via the parallel port from Marktech, 0181 841 7133. I hope that it doesn't get sidelined by the USB standard which plans to offer the same sort of unctionality via the serial port. Heroes of this issue are Europress, 01625 859333, for producing a beautiful multimedia version of Alice in Wonderland. As well as being nicely done (look for a review in the next issue) it only costs £20! Villains are the cable companies who have been hacking through the roots of London's trees. I just read an article about Thames Water's fibre optic cable system which was installed alongside the London water ring main. Why weren't the drains used to deliver cables???? A pipeway exists into every house in every urban centre. Fibre optics won't mind what they share their conduit with either. 480z manuals are sometimes requested of the User Group. If anyone has any of these manuals, particularly the technical ones, that they would be willing to give to the group so that we can support 480z owners please contact any member of the committee or write to the FREEPOST address at the back of the magazine. I am indebted to Neil Stanley of the last issue who pointed out that you can exchange files between a Psion and a PC with the Psion emulator. I had thought of the emulator as an interesting application but had not appreciated that it had this sophisticated function. I now use this method most often to swap files from PC <> Psion. The only problem I find with any of this is remembering to close files on the Psion before transfer - unlike most PCs, you can turn the Psion off in any state and it will turn back on where you left off.

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OS/2 Warp Uncovered

by Stephen Sharrad

OS/2 Warp is, as you probably are aware, version three of IBM's well-known operating system. However. many people have heard the expression "OS/2" but have not yet used the software to any extent. With all of the media advertising, many who fancy their chances are possibly having a look at purchasing and installing OS/2 Warp.

To start with, there are currently several editions of Warp. There is the red-box version, also being the first release. This version needs you to own a separate copy of Microsoft Windows for Windows application support. Then there is the blue-box version. This includes what is called WIN-OS/2 - or full MS Windows Application support built in to OS/2.

If you already have OS/2 Version 2 then you need the blue-box version, as this version will install over version 2. If you have the red-box version, you will need to re-install everything on your system. Note that you cannot upgrade the red-box to the blue-box product - again, complete re-installation will be required with the partition being formatted.

The installation is pretty straight foward. However, you may be asked if you want to re-format the hard-disk with a HPFS partition. HPFS (High Performance File System) is better from OS/2's viewpoint (it includes features like long filenames and very little fragmentation) but means that if you boot from a DOS floppy diskette you will not be able to access the hard-disk. HPFS is also preferable if you are going to install either LAN Manager or LAN Server on the machine.

During installation, you may be asked what graphics resolution you wish to run your machine at. I've had some problems with the Cirrus Logic GD-5429 - initially I found that my screen display was corrupt. If your screen does become corrupt, then reset the machine, and press ALT-F1 when the OS/2 small white box appears in the top left-hand corner of the screen - this should put the machine back into VGA mode.

I have used OS/2 Version 2 for some time and unfortunately I have to say that I am disappointed with Warp. There are certain features with Warp which are good but there are also some severe problems. Notable is sound card support. One of the good features about Warp is that it has the ability to recognise many features fitted to a machine - such as sound card, CD-ROM drive etc. Unfortunately, the Soundblaster support just simply does not work. If you go into a DOS session (a DOS session is an option selected from your front screen which makes your machine work and feel like a DOS machine) and run something like DOOM (I know, I know, but I don't spend my life playing games but this is the only example I can think of at the moment) the session soon locks up

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when the app tries to send sound to the speakers.

One good thing about Warp is that it does recover from locked sessions pretty well (by you pressing Ctrl-Esc) but also seems to generate a lot of the bad sessions itself. I even can have the desktop generate a "Stack Overflow in the exception handler) simply by opening up the settings option for an item on the desktop.

One thing with OS/2 is that there are a few programs that simply won't work because the programs need to be redesigned with OS/2 in mind. One such program is Lap Link - I find that data transferred over becomes corrupted. I guess this is something to do with the timing of operations - but with OS/2 because the machine is multitasking and several things may be happening at once, the timings of operations continually become interrupted.

Another thing you must never do on an OS/2 machine is run any sort of de-fragmentation program. This is because OS/2 keeps what are called extended attributes on the disk. Because these don't show up as files, defrag programs simply just overwrite these attributes. I believe there might be some OS/2 defragmention programs for OS/2, but I've yet to try one of these out.

I prefer the WIN-OS/2 version to the one with Microsoft support optional. It seems to work better and I suppose it just what I'm used to. I haven't had any problems running any of the well-known applications with either windows support; but installing the Cirrus Logic Windows drivers is not a good idea. If you want a better windows display than 640*480*16, then either use the standard drivers with Windows or, if you have a Cirrus Logic 5429, then use a set of 5426 drivers if you can find them.

Basically, I hope IBM release a set of CSD's - or bug fixes for Warp. I would really like them to sort out the problems because I really don't think the software is really ready yet for everybody to use. OS/2 Warp definitely needs a fast machine. My machine is a 486 DX2/50 with 16Mb or RAM and 560Mb harddisk, and OS/2 runs very fast, but on machines such as an SX/25 a bit of waiting is to be expected. IBM say Warp will run on a 386 with 4Mb of RAM (now that is SLOW) but for any machine I would recommended 6Mb and if you are going to have multimedia support you will need more -8>12Mb!

Once again, if anybody has an problems (with Warp, RM Machines, or simply have any idea for an article they'd like to see written), please let me know; the details of how to contact me are in the back.

I had heard about problems with Warp and was surprised because OS/2 seems so well behaved on our server. I went in PC world and found an un-labelled HP PC running Warp very happily. I hunted around and discovered that it had 64M of RAM!!!

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Hi.txt

Download from Compuserve

Hi! Welcome!

The big fluffy swivel-tilt chairs may be too close to the glass. The view westward a little too exciting. With the room jutting cantilever out over the cliffs, way high over the waves, with the roof rolled back to let the starlight through, is this too dramatic a place to meet? There are other rooms around here, of course, other views, but this one has been magnetic enough that so far I've just curled up here alone, thinking, looking out the window. I haven't yet explored much else.

Cozy in this warm sky, the first thing to do is thank Neil and Rilla and Brad and all the staff of NEWAGE for their kindness and welcome, for suggesting that this might be a good place for us to meet. I would have settled for a booth at the back of some sidestreet restaurant...when ideas are magnetic, does it matter where they're said? But they told me hey, it's an adventure, don't you and your friends deserve a beautiful place, why shouldn't it be beautiful?

They're right. This real estate may be a little pricey, but somehow they've found a way to cope. Thank you, Sysops!

I need to tell you how much I look forward to what most likely will be happening here, but it won't be easy. In person, Leslie and I are private people, withdrawn nearly to the point of reclusion. We've each had enough publicity to last us through this lifetime with too much left over. Walking into a world-wide forum is not what you would call a reclusive choice. So, a question:

WHO DO RICHARD AND LESLIE THINK THEY ARE, AND WHY ARE THEY HERE?

I won't speak for Leslie, and she's busy enough that she may not be able to speak for herself, at least for a while. She has storms of business sweeping over and around her at the same time as she has made slowing down and enjoying life a high priority. Torn between the two, as she is, she's resigned to peeking over my shoulder at this for the time being, though I don't think she'll be able to resist jumping in for long.

Who I think I am is a person wrapped in an old tension that this forum might possibly release. Since _Jonathan Livingston Seagull_ and all the way through _One_, for many years, I've been reading mail from remarkable minds and hearts all around the world, and most often the mail says two things:

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1. You're writing what I've known all along, 2. I've felt strange all my life, I thought I was the only one who kept these odd notions, and then I read _Illusions_...

Back before I stopped answering mail (didn't know how to answer and have priority left for daily life), I'd write back what I'd learned: You are not alone, your family is bigger than you know! But the tension would set and tighten — so many fascinating souls hidden out there in the world, so many thoughtful striving people every one hidden from the network of others who trust the same ideals, who steer by the same beacons, and there's no way I can tell them how many dear friends are alive this moment whom they will never meet!

From time to time after THE BRIDGE ACROSS FOREVER was published, letters would arrive, would touch on our desktops: I remember one from a chiropracter in Wisconsin who told us how much he saw himself in the book, if only he could find a woman in the world around him who remotely shared his values. In the same mail, a letter from a chiropracter in Florida who wrote to say how much she saw herself in the book, if only she could find one man in the world who remotely shared her values! We wanted to introduce them, to say at least your letters are alike... But we blinked and remembered that weren't running a dating service, or an advice clinic.

All we could say is thanks for writing, trust what you've known for so long; you're not alone. We were in a terrible position, forced to trust that what we think is really true: it's not up to us to make meetings happen, it's up to a principle of direction a whole lot more effective than even the best-intentioned wish to help.

How we wished there was some way for those who loved the ideas in our books to get in touch with each other!

When I'm moved enough to write to the author of a book, I don't want to pile obligations-to-respond on her or him, I want to widen the envelope of warmth or understanding I had when I was reading, I want to keep stretching my spirit in that direction, I want to stay in that environment of thought that closes when the book's closed. It's not the author I want to touch, but the spirit of the book.

What better way to release this tension than a place to meet and talk with other readers, mutual friends of books that I love, mutual friends, in this case, of Jonathan and Fletcher, Donald Shimoda and Pye and Tink

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and Mashara and Richard and Leslie, and what better place to find each other than this hillside in cyberspace, where clocks and miles don't exist?

HOW DID WE COME TO THIS PLACE?

I wrote a letter to a remarkable friend, Rae Hansen, twenty-some years ago, when she was three. Later it was published as a little book called _There's No Such Place as Far Away_. Last month Rae Hansen, just married, was killed in a car crash, and I flew to spend a day with her parents, old friends. Paul Hansen (sysop on the PPIFORUM) wondered why we hadn't talked in so many years, why we had lost touch. One reason, I said, is that the Internet is a mass of thorns and brambles, and if memory serves me right, CompuServe is "Please Wait..."

In an hour he brought me up to date, vaporized much of my ignorance, set me up on TAPCIS, showed me the electronic network that's humming now in spacetime over the psychic/spiritual network that has ever existed.

So here I am, a stumbling beginner again with computer conversation, but relaxed for a moment on this lovely overlook with you. It was Rae Hansen who opened the door.

From the external why I'm here to the internal one is an easy step. Lurking for the last couple of weeks on the Newage Forum, listening to the network humming, it's been a joy...here's the same spirit alive that lives in the letters that Leslie and I have read for so long!

The exhilaration of that discovery burst away my cautious fears: what about your precious privacy, Richard, what if there's a wacko in the forum who'll drive you mad, what if instead of a few minutes a day it takes longer to say hello to your own friends and teachers unmet, what if instead of dropping in for an occasional hi while they find each other you turn into a network mole?

There's a practical side I have, rarely seen. It will handle these concerns if they arise in fact.

CURIOSITY FOR A NEW MEDIUM

For centuries, book-writing has been pretty well a one-way street, and those of you who write know it well. From our quiet time shall we shape a stage upon which we let our ideas play. Next we set the play loose in the world, a rudderless package for others to find or miss, and trust the ones who might be moved or touched by the work to be led to it by inner magnets.

No return address on the package, just here it is and good luck

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dear reader. Never in history has a book had a chance to be the springboard for personal interacting than the chance brought by electric networks and fora like this one. Gone the hum of our watches, telling us to run. Gone the need to be Elsewhere than in the quiet of our thought, with a friend or two sharing mindspace.

What a delight that the one-way street of a published book can at last become two-way! How I wish I might have had a chance to talk on line with Antoine de Saint-Exupery or Nevil Shute, and with some of those who love their books! What fun it might be to let the book continue, to go on with writer and readers to other aspects of ideas that a book hasn't pages to explore, to watch the fission of other ways of thinking turn and sparkle from themes caught in print!

What fun, for the first time to be able to ask you questions and pose you tests and see if you reach the same conclusions that I do or turn to a completely different conclusion!

Face-to-face communication with many people at once is difficult and finally frustrating. Time and space tug at our coatsleeves, distracting: "My goodness, look at the hour!" "Got to move on tomorrow!" "Sorry, we've got to run!" Brush a hundred fascinating minds, know there are worlds to learn from them, worlds to share, know each of us carries some puzzle-piece that may fit another's picture, but the minute's up and it's time to go. Thus has it been for thirty years' writing, and in this room where threads of conversation can run as long as they wish, that can change.

PERSPECTIVE

Leslie and I have written a few books that have been or may be of interest to a tiny hundredth of a fraction of the world's population. All but a few have never heard of any of the books. A very few may have heard of one book or another, but have never read one. A verier few have not only heard of a book but have seen one. Fewer still have not only seen but touched and opened one. Fewer still have not only opened but read one. Of those, most have read and yawned, put the book down and forgotten. Fewer still have read a book and thought it touched a chord, thought it reminded them of something they've always known but never put in quite those words. And the tiniest few of all have read more than one, found them to be friends in print.

To Leslie and me, however, that teensy fraction of a fraction of one percent of the people in the world comes to thousands of people of

continued on page 24

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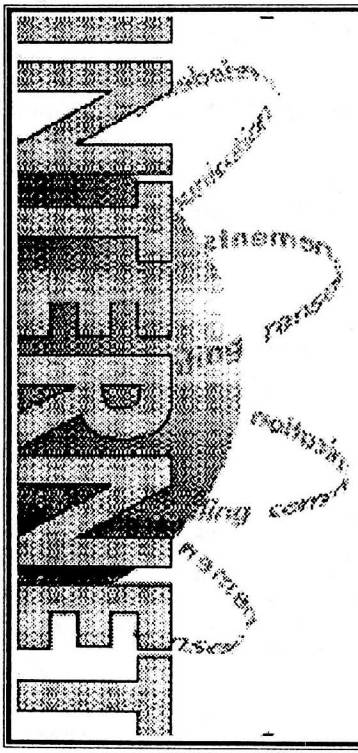

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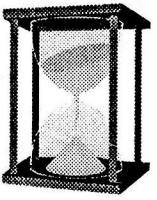

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grand imagination and courage, who discover and practice similar strange ideas and share a similar off view of humanity and its possibilities.

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(Hey, look. When you touch the front of the armrest in these chairs, a little tray slides out. Carrot, celery and jicama sticks. Must be a little refrigerator in the armrest, or a replicator. Probably some hidden carrot-apple-juice dispenser within arm's reach, but I haven't found it yet.)

CAUTION, WARNING, DISCLAIMER

I am nobody's leader but my own, and a lot of the things I believe are probably wrong for anyone but me...some, I'll probably find, are wrong for me as well.

I'm saying this much too tamely.

I have a raging phobia about leaders and gurus. Really. Honorable people may study for years to earn a title, but when I see that title attached to their name something goes negative in me for a bit. Anyone who prefers to print Master or Reverend or Doctor or Swami or Rabbi or Mother or Father or Sister or Brother or The Right Honorable or His/Her Holiness to their name, or whose title begins in Baba and ends in -Ji, or who allows others to bow to them or deck their chairs in flowers or to donate money and sheep and jewelry and automobiles to them, a little voice says look out. They may well be lovely souls, but in my narrow world they're in real trouble.

These discriminatees in my world need to be ten times smarter, faster, more imaginative and most of all funnier than anybody else even to climb back to zero in my eyes. Anybody has such a title, and in addition they're solemn as owls, I feel myself physically repelled, move to the far corner of the room, slipping out the door at my earliest convenience. Anybody says, "I know what's right for you to think," I go up in a little cloud of green smoke. Instant green smoke, and gone.

Reading this over I think this guy must have had Some Scary Experiences, to rave on like that... Probably true.

OH

Since this is a section about the books and their ideas, here's the complete list of them:

STRANGER TO THE GROUND; 1963; Harper and Row
BIPLANE; 1966; Harper and Row
NOTHING BY CHANCE; 1968; Harper and Row

JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL: A Story; 1970; Macmillan
A GIFT OF WINGS; 1974; Macmillan
ILLUSIONS: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah; 1977; Delacorte
THERE'S NO SUCH PLACE AS FAR AWAY; 1979; Delacorte
THE BRIDGE ACROSS FOREVER: A Lovestory; 1984; Morrow
ONE; 1988; Morrow
RUNNING FROM SAFETY: An Adventure of the Spirit; to be published in September 1994; Morrow

And an interesting related book —ABOVE THE CLOUDS: A reunion of Father and Son, by Jonathan Bach; 1993; Morrow

There are a raft of old reviews out there somewhere, too, though they may not be completely trustworty comment. The way that Leslie and I can tell if a new book is going to be a best-seller is if the reviews are ferocious, if the most sophisticated reviewers pick up the book on pub date and slam it repeatedly against a hard rock. The more reviewers despise it, it seems, the more probable it seem that a LOT of readers are going to be interested. Go figure.

SO MUCH TO SAY

I'm fascinated with this experiment in electric humanity and I'm a good guinea pig, I think, because my/our books have been intimate ones, and if you've read one you know a lot about me/us...we don't have to start from zero.

Tell me what we need here...what do you think of this chance we have to meet? Why were we brought together this way? What do you wonder about, would you like to know that you don't see printed anywhere? Any gossip you've heard? Have you read the news reports that Richard Bach was killed flying in Switzerland? In Canada? ("If I'm going keep getting killed in the newspapers," he pouted, "why can't I get killed in the United States?")

Whether our experiment lasts for thirty days or thirty years probably doesn't matter. But our being here today does. Predictions welcome, general or specific. Is the world ready for books without endings?

— Richard Bach

This is a file I found on Compuserve and, as a lapsed seagull, I asked Richard Bach if I could print it here and he agreed.

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Windows 3.1 on RM Net 3.1

Hugh Wilding

Making Windows 3.1 available as a network option to users of Net 3.1 onwards is remarkably straightforward. There are, I believe, several ways of achieving this but the following describes a way which closely mimics the way in which RM set up Windows 3.0 on Net 3.1 and which therefore saves valuable network management time. There are also obvious cost benefits from continuing to make use of your investment in a sound network system viz. RM Net 3. You may need to acquire upgrade licenses to Windows 3.1 although my understanding of this issue is that network machines fitted with a multi-protocol boot rom (i.e. since Summer 1992) are so licensed. No doubt RM Sales will be happy to oblige...

Unfortunately, Windows 3.1 will not work with PC-186s. Dream on...

Firstly, set up a secure user, say W31MGR, with a suitable password and Q:\COMMAND.COM (i.e. MS-DOS) as the command processor. I have used Q and not ? as we really don't want this identity used on a 186! Give this user a drive M: with access to the root of your server i.e. C:\. Reboot your server. Secondly, you will need a set of Windows 3.1 disks. Mine came from RM courtesy of the backup routine of an S-series 486. Make sure that the disks are write-protected as we don't want set-up information written to these. We are going to install 3.1 to drive Q: so a temporary access with full read, write etc. rights is required. Do this at your server keyboard by typing directly SHARE XPUBLIC=C:\XPUBLIC / RWCDA. Now logon as W31MGR at either a station (not 186) with both a local floppy drive and a mouse. At the MS-DOS prompt, turn off security by typing TOGGLE OFF. Type in REUSE Q: \\SERVERX1\XPUBLIC. If your server is named differently e.g. BILL then replace SERVERX1 with BILL. Test out the new connection by typing MD Q:\W31. If you get any sort of error message, deal with it as appropriate and retry. Finally, check that the AUTOEXEC.BAT file in the root of Q: is set to read only. It should be but you never know and you don't want it overwritten!

The installation is carried out as if you are a single user. Insert Disk #1, change to drive A:, and type in SETUP. Ignore the dire warning about APPEND.COM running and press C to continue. Then press Enter to set up Windows now. Choose the Custom set up by pressing C. You now need to alter various settings to read as in Table 1:

Setup now begins the process of installation and will ask for disks as required. Now is a good time to check those write-protection tabs are open!

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Midway through the second disk, Windows itself will be started. If your screen remains stubbornly blank but with a Windows-style egg-timer, this is because you didn't type in TOGGLE OFF and so the network security routines prevent the setup routine from "seeing" drive Q:. Reset your computer and start again!

You are next asked for user details. This is your opportunity not to pin the blame for this blatant act of piracy where it fits e.g. Educational Software Library/Research Machines plc. but to follow the laid down software registration procedures of your own establishment e.g. Mr Squeers/ Dotheboys Hall. The following screen is to determine the extent of your proposed installation so clear the check boxes against Set up all components and Set up applications already on Hard Disk(s) i.e. the only box checked is Set Up Printers.

Now, please attend most carefully. You have arrived at a screen which asks about Virtual Memory. Virtual Memory is A Very Wonderful Thing but not for us because it does horrendous things with swapfiles etc. and will bring your network to a grinding halt so be warned. Click on Change then select Type to read None before clicking on Change again. Setup then informs you that it has been unable to update system files on the floppy disk. Do not panic - click on Cancel as we want these files written to the Windows directory on Q: anyway.

Continue to feed in disks and shortly you will be told that new CONFIG and AUTOEXEC files have been written to Q:. Set up your printers as you require, not forgetting to indicate which is your default. You will also see for the first time, the "truename" of your network printers when you make the necessary connections to your ports. Skip the Windows tutorial - you can come back to this at any time from Program Manager - and click on Exit to MS-DOS. You are almost done but not quite. Delete the CONFIG.WIN and AUTOEXEC.WIN files that you find in Q:\W31 as well as SMARTDRV.EXE. Smartdrive is already running on your server so is not required and its existence in this version is doubly confusing as the latter is almost certainly v4.x and will NOT run under MS-DOS v4.

Make sure you are still in Q:\W31 and type WIN. You will now be rewarded by the "new" Logo screen that the rest of the world has enjoyed since 1992. When the new Program Manager appears, select Control Panel from the Main program group. This now enables you to carry out any customisation that you want globally for all your users. You can set colours, install extra fonts and even the speaker driver for 3.1 that you may have access to etc. but there are a couple of checks first to be made. Click on International and marvel at the genius of Microsoft! Despite all of our best efforts on that very first screen, you

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Table 1

Computer:	MS-DOS System
Display:	VGA
Mouse:	Logitech
Keyboard:	Enhanced 101 or 102 key US and Non US keyboard
Keyboard layout:	British
Language:	English (International)
Network:	Microsoft Network (or 100% compatible)

will need to setup United Kingdom as the Country. Do this and Measurement will change to Metric automatically as will the various other formats to the proper, British way of doing things. Also make sure that in Desktop, the box against Fast "Alt+Tab" Switching is checked - this is the feature called "cool" switching and is well worth while. You can also enable screen savers etc. while you're at it.

Exit Windows again. Do TYPE PROGMAN.INI. See all the references to the program groups with their path names? This will cause Windows to jam completely when your users attempt to use this file - what we need to do is get rid of the Q:\W31\ bit and just leave the program group e.g. MAIN.GRP. Now for a bit of magic. Run M:\MGR\WINMNG\FIXPMINI and all those unsightly Q:\W31\s just disappear. Do another TYPE PROGMAN.INI to check. It is likely that the last group has not lost its path so load the offending file into your favourite text editor and do the necessary. The reason for this seems to be the lack of a carriage return on the last line of the .INI file. We now want to save our .INI and .GRP files away safely against the proverbial so RMTREE COPY Q:\W31*.INI Q:\W31\NET\SETUP and then the .GRP files. At the same time copy WIN.COM similarly. It is also a good idea to make these saved copies read-only so do ATTRIB +R Q:\W31\NET\SETUP*.*. Finally, create a file DUMMY.TXT in the root of Q:\ through your usual method. The file can contain something like PLEASE DO NOT DELETE THIS DIRECTORY. Set the file to read only. You now EXIT the system.

You now have a basic set up to test out. Log back on as W31MGR but this time, do not alter Q:. Make a directory TEMP in N:\. Alter your path statement to read Q:\W31;N:\;M:\;Q:\;P:\. Type in SET WINDIR=N:\ and SET TEMP=N:\TEMP. Now copy the contents of Q:\W31\NET\SETUP into N:\. The moment of truth - type WIN and remember that my telephone number is in the back of this magazine!

Now you can have a little play while I run through some techie stuff. Although the setup we have created is

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for a typical (386) user, when win.com runs, it will auto adjust for machine type e.g. M series 286 will be in standard mode, and it will also determine which type of mouse is actually attached (although this may be a function of the Logitech mouse driver - I really don't know). What, however, is pretty certain is that if we want to use any 186 programs under the RUNPC186 emulator from within Windows then we will have to run Windows in standard and not enhanced mode. This is NOT A BAD THING though as enhanced mode runs slower on a network anyway! (Or so my mate, Steve, says and, remember, we don't want nasty virtual memory on our network so tough). Also bear in mind that I have no X, E, V or D-series stations nor do I have anything other than VGA screens so I leave this part of the final frontier to others...

By now I am sure you will have guessed that the keyboard commands you made in the last but one paragraph can be replicated in a batch file. Copy Q:\WIN.BAT into N:\, launch your choice of text editor and alter it such that it looks like mine below (hint - I have changed lines 3, 23-25 and 29). Before testing out the batch file, you will need to temporarily assign your secure user W31MGR to the group SETUP. Do this by typing SET GROUP=SETUP which creates the appropriate environmental variable needed in lines 23 and 25.

```
@if not $%DEBUG%==$on echo
 off
rem Modified by KM 27/02/91
 V2.00C
rem Modified by HW 27/02/95
 Windows 3.1 support
cls
set
 ENVSPC=**************************
set ENVSPC2=
if $%WINDIR%==$ SET
 WINDIR=%UDRIVES%
if %WINDIR%==N:\ SET
 WINDIR=N:
if not exist
 %WINDIR%\pmukuser.txt copy
 p:\pm\pmukuser.txt
 %WINDIR%\pmukuser.txt > nul
if $%TEMP%==$ SET
 TEMP=%WINDIR%\TEMP
if exist %TEMP%\dummy.txt
 goto tempdirok
md temp > nul
copy q:\dummy.txt temp > nul
:tempdirok
set SAVEP=%PATH%
set
 PATH=q:\w31;p:\ww;p:\sb;p:\pm;p:
 \qw;q:\ex3;%SAVEP%
chkmode /mode:ibm
if errorlevel 5 goto XM
if errorlevel 4 goto
 186error
if errorlevel 2 goto XM
goto 186error
:XM
if not $%GROUP%==$ copy
 q:\w31\net\%GROUP% %WINDIR%
 > nul
WIN.COM /S %1 %2 %3 %4 %5 %6
 %7 %8 %9
if not $%GROUP%==$ for %f in
 (*.grp win.ini control.ini
 progman.ini system.ini
```


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```
 win.com) do del %WINDIR%\%f
 > nul
goto finish
:186error
echo
 É͸͸͸
```

have the latter, don't forget that you need to run WNETUSR.COM before WIN.COM. If your Network CD is set up on drive H:, you will find either a CD101 error reported on screen or blank, black lines across the Windows logo screen. The workaround to this is to press 'F' two or three times whereupon Windows will load, but the solution is to either rename H: O: or create a new drive G: which refers to the server drive (and which could stand for Graphics, a subdirectory with read-only rights and all the publicly available graphic files.

Hugh tells me he has had quite a lot of feedback from the first printing of this article - I thought it was the final draft but I was wrong. I am delighted to hear that there was a response because one danger of this job is the "No-one-can-hear-you-scream-in-space" syndrome where you become convinced that no-one is reading it!

Our Internet Happening

by Hugh Wilding & co

Lucky Sponsors

After all the media interest since the New Year in the internet, there can be few readers who have not now heard of this particular global phenomenon. We were by no means the first to get connected but we were extremely fortunate to be chosen by Dixons/PC World to participate in their Schoolsnet project. This led to the arrival of a Packard Bell Executive Multimedia PC complete with pentium and modem inside, a subscription to the BBC Networking Club and Claire Paine, the project leader-cum-trainer in late January. The PC was duly locked away in the Head's study whilst those staff involved got to reading the first ten pages of the various manuals. At the same time, a discreet word in the corporate RM ear, led to our inclusion on the RM Internet for Learning field trial - for this, we provided one of our own PCs (yes, one from RM!). Finally, in negotiation for a direct telephone link, Cable Telecom offered us a second free for a year in return for some future PR.

Ready to dive in

By February 9th we were all set for the Grand Launch! This took place in the Library where we have a small cluster of machines. The long-suffering Claire was installed for the day to train squads of excited schoolboys, the Mayor had been invited and even Tim Clark (RM IFL project leader) had promised to take a rare exeat from Milton Park. Forgive the hype but the day was extremely successful. Star performer was the Mayor who arrived for a fifteen minute whirl and in fact stayed for an hour and a half, after

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insisting on being shown everything to do with the internet.

Bottom Line

Now, six weeks later, what do we think of it so far? Terrific - but with some reservations and qualifications. Firstly, schools have to subscribe to a filtered service (as the RM and BBC offerings both are). Secondly, even with a filtered service, adult supervision is essential at all times. Thirdly, local access points are vital to keep the telephone connection costs within reason - Dixons CTC (a co-participant in Dixons Schoolsnet) estimates that it is costing £40 a week to log on from Bradford to Pipex in Docklands (the BBC POP). There are going to be few schools able to afford that scale of overhead. Do contact your local cable company if you have one - they are very keen to service schools. Fourthly, direct lines are a must. Our own experience with internal PABXs is that these can handle 2400 baud without difficulty but not speeds above 9600 which are required for world wide web access and which you will want. Finally, look on access not as an IT thingie/toy but as part of the library resource which is exactly what it is - with of course IT toy implications.

Services

As to a comparison of the relative merits of our two service providers, well... It is very close. The software provided is all shareware with TCP Winsock and Eudora in common. RM provide Netscape as their web browser which I find more versatile and functional than the BBC's WinWeb. In fact, I find that Netscape provides me with everything outside of e-mail as I have to confess that I have yet to use either Gopher or WinVN. With WinWeb, the BBC provides WS FTP, Archie, WinQVTNet and LView3.1 and also some pretty techie-type documentation which is still in draft format - RM's is very superior in that respect. Both RM and the BBC provide a helpline within office hours and both have proved very approachable. With regards to access, the BBC seems still limited to its Pipex/Docklands roots and at times getting through to Pipex seems problematic. Times to avoid seem to be weekday early evenings when connection, and even staying on line, at times is very erratic. In contrast, getting through to Abingdon has been very easy but I imagine the RM Server is pretty lightly loaded at the moment. RM are in the process of establishing access points throughout the country - I expect these developments are reported elsewhere in this issue. Both the BBC and RM also have a number of education-specific web pages with RM's expanding rapidly with links that will take you off to the NCET pages etc. But, on balance, RM has it.

In Print

Of the various publications we have looked at, **.net** is the monthly magazine to go for although at times the content is adult and perhaps best post-16. **.net** also produce a book but the best book is undoubtedly T*he UK Schools Internet Primer* by ??? and ???

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who ran an internet project at Mill Hill last year. If you must, then buy *The Internet for Dummies* or *The Internet Golden Directory* (the second edition is the one with the web sites) from your favourite bookseller who will undoubtedly by now have racks and racks of US wall-to-wall reference tomes that will take you through the entire UNIX command structure in 800 lucid, enthralling and unforgettable pages, all set in one of those typefaces that only Americans appear capable of reading without bringing on a migraine attack and all requiring the existence of a second mortgage in order to purchase. The main reason to keep the credit card sheathed is that, once you are on the internet, you will find all the documentation (and indeed all the software) you need within easy grasp.

Well, now you have decided that you're going to get connected, what joys can you look forward to? Let three of our pupils enlighten you...

David Thomas is a Year12 student currently taking English, History and Maths at A-level. He shares internet access with his father. You can e-mail hIm at *david@booker.demon.co.uk*.

I am a first year sixth form student studying at Claires Court School. I have had an internet connection at home though Demon using Mosaic and more recently Netscape for Linux. My school has just received a connection to the internet though the BBC Networking Club in a project sponsored by Dixons, PC World and Packard Bell. This connection has allowed the pupils of the school to access a wide range of information from the Klingon Language Institute (*http://www.kli.org/KLIhome.html*) to information on stars for physics (*http://www.eia.brad.ac.uk/btl*). As well as allowing access to WorldWideWeb pages and other internet sites it also allows the pupils to use the e-mail system. Pupils have made friends at the other schools in the project both here and in the US. It also allows sixth form history students to e-mail history professors at university or download information which can be used in coursework which counts towards the final grade.

I am about to start coursework on Vietnam (*http://lcweb2.loc.gov/pow/powhome.html* - the database on missing US personnel) and the information I will be able to access using the internet will be a great asset and help me a great deal. The other major resource of the internet is newsgroups and these provide a good forum for discussion on many wide and varied topics, such as *news:alt.alien.visitors* or *news:alt.censorship (but check these for yourself before letting Year 9 loose!)*. It would be virtually impossible to find a newsgroup on a subject which did not interest someone in this school as there are so many of them. Already there is a waiting list in operation as there has been so much interest in this project.

Currently access times can be fairly slow and this does cause problems

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if large amounts of data are being downloaded or if a lot of sites need to be searched before you find the information you need. Instead of using servers what is needed is direct access to the internet such as that at universities which experience very quick data transfer times. When data transfer times speed up the internet will grow even quicker.

Super Hypeway

At the moment there is currently a great deal of information about the internet in the media. There has been a lot of hype about the information super highway and the internet. The information superhighway is still in its infancy and is totally different to the internet. Unfortunately there is a great deal of misinformation with these programs. The internet is not full of hardcore porn or pirated software. Only a small minority of computers contain such information and not nearly every computer on the internet. The internet is an excellent tool to find out information and to enjoy looking for information on a hobby. It is something that children should be encouraged and trained to use. The educational information on the internet will be of great use to them (maths for example - *http://euclid.math.fsu.edu/Science/math.html*) and they can be supervised if needed. They should not be stopped due to scare stories about what children could download from a small minority of underground sites.

Despite all this hype, the internet connection will be a great asset to the School and pupils not only for the information it provides but also for the future. The internet is growing rapidly and in ten years time it will be part of common day life like the telephone. It is good that the pupils of this school have a chance to get ahead by learning how to use the internet.

Pupil's view

Maninder Baidwan has been a pupil at Claires Court since 1990. He is in Year 11 with GCSEs due this summer and hopes ultimately to become a surgeon hence all the interest in gory web sites.

I have thoroughly enjoyed using the Internet even before the Open Day. I was quite moved by the large amount of information which could be extracted from the World Wide Web. I was amazed by the large libraries of Star Wars and Star Trek (*http://www.cosy.sbg.ac.at/rec/startrek/index.html*) pictures which are available at the touch of a button. We can now transfer and download a certain file from anywhere in the world and print out pictures or text for projects. I like many would find this paticularly useful when doing coursework and other projects or homework when needing particular data to illustrate certain points.

Sliced Body

The Visible Human Project (*http://www.nlm.nih.gov/extramural_research.dir/visible_human.html*) was brought to my attention and I found that the graphic transfer from the server was truly

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remarkable. For weeks I was totally glued to the computer to find new areas to bring to everyone's attention. Many would remark that my life was completely devoted to the Internet judging by the amount of time I spent on it.

We had an Open Day to launch our connection to the intnernet and this was the time I really got used to the functions. I was set aside on a separate machine for most of the day. First I got used to the terminolgy within the Internet. Such as the Nettiquettes! This is a way of being pleasant to people using the Internet (*ftp://ftp.sura.net/pub/nic/internet.literature/netiquette.txt*).

To retrieve imformation for the Internet you have to type an address, for example to find out more about dinosaurs:-

http://rs6000.bvis.uic.edu:80/museum/Dna_To_Dinosaurs.html"

This address links to a server which may be based at a University or even a company who specialises in the subject. So, therefore you actually are contacting their server to send back the file you require.

When searching for a topic on the World Wide Web pages I use the Lycos Search Engine (*http://lycos.cs.cmu.edu/*) which has been added to my Hotlist (WinWeb is the browser on the PC I use most). This saves me the need to remember an address for a topic name and allows the Search Engine to respond by retrieving from its search bank certain addresses linked with the topic you have chosen whether it be Arts (*http://www.cgrg.ohio-state.edu/Newark/artsres.html*) or Zoo animals (*http://www.nhm.ac.uk/index.html*).

I believe that if this system of retrieving imformation was not so expensive, every home would have access to the new technology. I believe that in the near future it could become an essential part of school equipment all-across the world. This would mean that medical knowledge could be sent and stored on a server and be recalled at the time of need. The frog dissection pages (*http://curry.edschool.Virginia.EDU:80/~insttech/frog/*) are a good example of this. I am thinking about possibly reaching into my pocket for a new modem with World Wide Web readily available.

The access to many servers is a very time consuming process and can sometimes take a large amount of time transfering and downloading certain data and hopefully in the near future should improve with more and more servers available to access home pages of certain topics.

Happy Surfing!!!

Another aspect

James Branch is in Year 8 at Claires Court and is about to finish KS3. His friend, Richard Frizoni, says that James is computer mad. "James never had a teddy, he used a ZX80 as his cuddle." *(Shurely shome mishtake, the lad musht mean a 380Z! - Ed)*

Over my time of using the internet, I have visited a lot of home pages and so far, the best page I have looked at is

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the *.wav sounds page. I have listened to a lot of the sounds and had a look at some pictures on the internet. I have put my name in some people's guest books and I hope that it will carry on expanding so that we can all talk to each other and I might make friends and penpals over the internet. The internet is educational as well as entertaining and some of the pages are really weird such as the nutters page and the geeks page (*news:alt.geek*). I hope that during my life at Claires Court the internet will expand so that I can visit lots more sites and learn a lot more about the internet as well as looking at a lot more things.

Thank you to the person who put it all together or Claires Court would not have the internet to look at now plus the multi-media personal computers we use today. PC's have changed a lot from the 8086's they used in the old days - 8086's would not even be able to load the internet program let alone contact the internet home pages. In the future every household might have a personal computer with 1 Gigabyte of RAM and a 1000 Gigabyte hard drive, a cinema touch sensitive screen and a modem with a baud rate of 999,999,999,999,999,999. I think it was a good idea for Claires Court to get a modem and a Pentium. I am in the internet club and think it is really good. At the moment I am working on finding some freeware to download and some demos of future games (*http://wcl-rs.bham.ac.uk/GamesDomain*).

I will have to get to know the intenet better before I start to explore the smallest nook and cranny of the internet - I am still learning how to surf. If you think of it as a beach with surfing lessons for sale, the teachers take you out about a hundred yards and if you learn, you can go out further and further until you are an experienced internet surfer. But there is always help available, even if from unexpected quarters (*http://www.netters.is/~pesi/baywatch.html*)!

The accounts above can also be viewed on our own web pages - goto *http://www.rmplc.co.uk/eduweb/sites/ccourt/index.html* and find out more! Alternatively, please e-mail us at *claireset-slss@bbcorg.co.uk* or *ccourt@rmplc.co.uk*. Finally, a very big thank-you to Dixons/PC World, Packard Bell, RM plc and Cable Telecom for helping make the internet happen here at Claires Court School.

I have nothing but envy for what Hugh has achieved!! If you haven't had a look at the internet you should try to arrange it. Right now those of us without a fairy godmother are paying a lot to BT for our surfing - unless you are within range of a local POP. This will change as more arrive. RM say they will have one of the biggest sets of contact points but will face competition from providers like Compuserve who claim they will have fast connections across the country by next January. I can see big problems with traffic jams on this highway but there is a huge amount of work being done to alleviate this

Minutes of the AGM held at the Novotel Stevenage Saturday March 18th 1995

The meeting was attended by 16 RMUG members.

These committee members also attended: Ian Burgess (IB) Chairman, Philip Fox (PF), Steve Rochford, (SR) Hugh Wilding (HW), Maureen Wernham (MW), David Palmer (DP), Edith Todd (ET), Peter Wallace, (PW) Mary Mabey (MM).

Apologies received from: Myfanwy Wallace, Glenn Taylor, Stephen Sharrard, Liz Owen and Jane Beech.

Officer's Reports

Chairman

Ian Burgess thanked the previous committee members, especially Steve Rochford for the "long period" of his editorship, Maureen Wernham for her management of the Training Weekend and RM for their generous support of the Training Weekend with both personel and equipment.

He informed the meeting that Mike Meyer (RM Marketing and Communications Manager) was now the RM link person for the group as Colin Watkins is working for a separate company marketing Success Maker. (Colin would like to retain his links with the group) Ian noted that the Training Weekend had been successful apart from some criticism of the catering and the weekend of October 20-22nd had been booked at the Novotel in Nottingham for this year.

He noted concern at the decline in membership numbers and feelings expressed by members that events needed to be organised outside London. He noted that the attempt by David Palmer to hold one in Yorkshire had been abandoned through poor response but felt that we should "revisit" this subject and attempt to find a solution. Ian then announced that he wished to resign from chairmanship of the group.

Treasurer (HW)

A statement was produced by Hugh. (See attached copy) It is for only 10 months- not a full year, does not include any advertising revenue or show some expenses which still need to be met - editorial fees for the last 2 magazines.

The account is now in a Barclay's "community account" which gives interest on capital. Bank charges have been reduced by using direct electronic transfer to pay accounts monthly. The balance is good because of the profit on the Training Weekend. A large sum is retained because it includes sufficient funds to repay members' subscriptions if the group ceased to function and many expenses for the Weekend need to be met before it takes place.

Membership (MW)

Membership continues to fall - see attached details. Most new members

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appear come in response to adverts received via RM Direct

Magazine (DP)

David Palmer offered to commit "Hari kiri" publicly for his first effort as editor but hoped that we would forgive him as this was a steep learning curve and it was a difficult task to follow Steve. He asked for contributions from members.

Membership Fees

David Palmer proposed that membership fees remain unchanged.

John Williams proposed an amendment: "that membership fees remain unchanged until the next AGM or next extraordinary meeting." This was seconded by HW and carried unanimously.

Changes to the constitution

1. RM is now RMplc. SR proposed that "we replace all references to Research Machines with "RM," including that in the group's name. Motion seconded by DP and carried.

2. SR proposed that we remove the words "in the spring of " from the sentence : An annual General meeting shall be arranged in the spring of each year.

This would make it possible to hold the AGM during the Training weekend in future when more people are present. The motion was seconded by ET and carried.

Renumeration of Officers

IB proposed that we retain the current editorial payment of £275 for each magazine (6 issues pa.)

RM User Group Training Weekend 1995

We are well advanced with planning for the following sessions:- Word (Int & Adv), Excel (App, & uses) Access, Control (Cheap & Regular!), Window Box, DTP (2, 1 on primary), Internet (inc. make your own page) CDROMs, AEGIS, Win 3.1 on Met 3.1, Surgeries, OS/2 and more. So make a note in your diary of the date and start putting requests in for money from your Inset budget.

Date: 20-22 October 1995

Venue: Novotel, Nottingham

Price: £250 (provisional)

Nottingham is a busy city with lots to do both in the city and its environs for spouses/partners who are not interested in computers. Your partner can stay in your room (all rooms have double beds) for no extra charge although please not that the hotel will charge for any meals taken.

West Country Training Day

Please contact any member of the committee if you are interested in attending or hosting such an event.

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It was noted that the Advertising Manager gets 10% of total advertising revenue collected.

Peter Wallace suggested that we discuss incentive payments to other members who introduced advertisers to the magazine.

PF proposed that the new committee discuss this and report back at the AGM. Seconded by PW and carried.

Ordinary Members:

Philip Fox stated that Glenn Taylor and Steve Sharrard wished to be reconsidered for the committee. Liz Owen wished to step down.

Election of Officers:

Office	Name	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman:	P. Fox	I. Burgess	D. Palmer
Vice-Chair	E. Todd	M. Wernham	S. Rochford
Secretary	M. Mabey	D. Palmer	J. Williams
Treasurer	H. Wilding	S. Rochford	M. Mabey
Membership	M. Wernham	H. Wilding	J Williams

Co-opted Members

Name	Proposed by:	Seconded by:
G. Taylor	E. Todd	H. Wilding
S. Sharrard	D. Palmer	M. Wernham
P. Wallace	G. Legg	J. Williams
I. Burgess	P. Fox	E. Todd
S. Rochford	M. Wernham	M. Mabey

AOB

DP asked if the group could buy shares in RMplc? HW replied that the UserGroup was unable to do this because it is not a corporate body. The shares would need to be in a single name and it would probably not be cost effectrive to transfer them to different chairmen. It was suggested that the group ask Mike Meyer for details.

John Williams expressed concern that the next AGM at the October Training Weekend be held mid-day to allow those members who were not resident in the hotel the opportunity to arrive in time for the meeting. This was generally agreed as a good idea and PF promised to arrange the programme to accommodate the meeting just before lunch. PF asked DP to insert an advert for a Training day in the West Country in the next issue of the Magazine. No date or venue to be given, just a notice of intent and a request for members to register interest.

The meeting concluded with requests from PF to non-elected members to consider whether they would like to volunteer their services as committee members or observe the next meeting.

Suggestions for the content of sessions at the next Training Weekend were also requested. PF promised to analyse the evaluation sheets from last October.

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MCB Space utility for RM Net LM2. This Network manager's utility is used to monitor the disk space occupied by a user's home directory. As such, it functions in a similar manner to the NETDSK utility for RM Net3.x and can be set so as to prevent a user who has exceeded the allocated disk space, from completing the log on process until files have been deleted or moved to floppy disk. **This product comes with a site licence for only £19.95!**

MCB Pool utility for RM Net LM. This invaluable utility allows users on Net LM to transfer files to others with the minimum of fuss and delay. Especially useful for teachers to distribute files to a class of users. **With site licence for only £19.95.**

MCB File Manager 3. This Windows utility is designed for schools where the normal Windows 3.0/3.1 File Manager is too complex/'dangerous' for unrestricted access by pupils. This utility restricts drives to those chosen by the Network Manager to be operated upon to perform deletions / copying / sub directory creation / formatting tasks. **Site licence only £24.95** Our **free** demo disk is available on request.

Does your School Word Processes French / German or Spanish text using Windows based software? Then you need our site licence for FrKeys! When you see FrKeys running we are sure you will agree with us that this is the most intuitive way of putting a variety of accented characters directly into the text of any Windows word processor. When loaded, a thin ribbon window is kept permanently on the top of any Windows word processor application running, with the accented characters selected by a single click, **in the font and point size you are currently using.** The special characters are fully configurable and can include several language sets plus mathematical symbols etc. A large-text version (FrBig) is included **free of charge** for young children and the visually impaired. This unique software package, for use on stand-alone or network stations, comes with a **site licence for only £29.95!**

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Your Magazine

I make no apologies for leaving this page as it is since I agree with every word!

I really do welcome items for the magazine from anyone. You don't have to be a great writer to send something in; send a letter or a short tip for the Hints and Tips pages, everything is welcome. If you want to phone and talk something over then please do; even if you aren't sure how to write something down then I can always include your ideas in Hints and Tips or as a plea for help; some of you will recognise your phone calls on the Hints and Tips pages!

I would be particularly pleased to hear from the people who are using RM computers at home; there are quite a lot of you out there. Some of you will be experienced at working with computers and I would be interested to know why you chose RM for home use. Others will have responded to RM's advertising, perhaps because your children use the same computers at school. How are you getting on with your new machine? Did you have any problems getting started? It doesn't matter if you still don't know the answer to the problem- this is how you'll find out - and it doesn't matter if you think that your problem was trivial; remember that there are many other people who are going to be in exactly the same position as you and will welcome the help that you can give.

If you are writing for me then the ideal is to send me a disc produced using Word or Word for Windows but I can cope with any word processor that runs on a PC or Nimbus (I think). If what you are sending is short then a letter on good old fashioned paper is fine. I can also accept articles left on the bulletin board - the easiest way to to do this is to prepare your article in a word processor and save it normally. You then send a short e-mail to me and attach your file to it when you are on-line. It's actually easier to do than to describe because the whole thing is menu driven.

Finally, we pay for published articles at the rate of £5 per printed page (although all payments are at the Editor's discretion).

Advertising in the Magazine

Full and half page advertisements can be placed in the magazine and details can be obtained from the Advertising Manager. We also take classified ads and members may place free ads for surplus equipment in MicroMart.

Rates

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